DON'T CALL HER WORK 'CHICK LIT'

SOPHIE KINSELLA PREFERS "ROMANTIC COMEDY." PAGE 20

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Tuesday, October 21, 2014 www.metro.us | t: MetroPhilly | f: MetroPhilly

Community. Philadelphia's new drug law, which decriminalizes small amounts of weed, went into effect on Monday. Pot activist Michael Whiter got the first citation after lighting up at City Hall. PAGE 02

First pot-smoker cited under new law

Lt. Joseph O'Brien writes Whiter a $25 citation for smoking marijuana in public on Monday morning. Inset, Whiter smokes at home. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Exclusive: New doors for SEPTA?

PAGE 04

Ty Dolla $ign is in the money

PAGES 16-17

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3 '9 things we learned about "Hannibal" Season 3 at PaleyFest'

Local tweet

"Marijuana is now decriminalized in Philly?? Wow.... you don't have to be a pot smoker to appreciate how big of an improvement this is to law."

But it probably helps if you are pot smoker, @bishalini. #JustSaying

Man to frame first marijuana citation

City Hall. Pot activist Michael Whiter got the first ticket for public marijuana usage under the new law.

Bystanders took photos of pot activist Mike Whiter being cited near City Hall on Monday morning. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Michael Whiter lit a joint and took two long drags while standing in the City Hall courtyard Monday morning before a small crowd of pot enthusiasts and two cops.

A bike cop rolled up, and Whiter dropped the joint. The cop stomped it out and reached for his citation booklet.

"That f***er is getting framed right there," said Whiter, 38, pointing proudly at his citation. "I just f***ing smoked weed in Philly and got a ticket. That's awesome."

Outspoken pot activist Whiter earned the first pot citation handed out in Philadelphia on the day the city's decriminalization of marijuana law took effect. The city is officially the largest in America to decriminalize small amounts.

The ticketed offense: "marijuana usage in public." The description: "Male was smoking a brown, hand-rolled cigarette that smelled of Marijuana."

Fellow pot legalization crusader N.A. Poe, Whiter's friend, said, "It's pretty much a historic moment — a moment we worked toward for a long time. It's kind of anti-climatic in a way. But it's nice."

The rules

Under the new law, any resident found in possession of 30 grams or fewer will face a $25 fine.

- For public use, the fine is $100 or up to nine months of community service.
- The marijuana will be confiscated, but the offender will not face criminal charges.

Visit **Metro.us** for more with Whiter and pics of him smoking.

For the better part of a year, Whiter and Poe met regularly with chief inspector Joe Sullivan and Steve Glenn, commander of the Civil Affairs Unit, at coffee shops across the city.

The goal of the so-called "Donut Summits" was to find common ground after marijuana rallies in recent years became combative.

Since the law passed, Whiter has publicly advocated for Sullivan to personally write the first ever citation and hand it over with a handshake. But Sullivan said he was pulled away for a conference call. He instead dispatched Lt. Joseph O'Brien, of the Civil Affairs Unit, to oversee the exchange.

"I was a little bummed Sullivan didn't show," Whiter said, "but I was happy overall."

So, is he going to pay the fine or take the community service? "Pay the fine. I'm lazy, man."

TOMMY ROWAN
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South Jersey

Ebola fears keep students home

Children who were expected to start classes this week at a Burlington County school will now stay at home even longer after serving the 21-day waiting period meant for those traveling from Africa, the school district announced.

Maple Shade Schools' Superintendent Beth Norcia took to the district's Website to let parents know about the situation.

The students in question are not suffering from Ebola symptoms nor are they from an infected area of Africa. Norcia said in her original letter that the childrens' parents have "elected to keep their children home past the 21-day waiting period."

The children are from Rwanda which is more than 2,500 miles away from the affected countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea in West Africa. They will start school in Maple Shade next week.

In an email to Metro, Norcia added, "I appreciate everyone's concern and hope everyone respects our privacy as we continue to move our focus back on educating all of our children."

CHRISTINA PACIOLLA

Ebola virus / FILE PHOTO

Teachers. SRC-ordered health benefit changes delayed by judge

A Philadelphia judge on Monday delayed a School Reform Commission order requiring public school teachers to contribute to their healthcare costs from going into effect pending litigation.

The Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) welcomed the news.

"The decision is a testament to the notion that these kinds of contract changes should be decided at the bargaining table," PFT President Jerry Jordan said in a statement. "Today's decision, for the moment, means PFT members can keep their current health care coverage without having to participate in the district's open enrollment process." METRO

Teachers protest contract changes last week. / FILE PHOTO

Old City

Pakistani activist to receive Liberty Medal tonight

Malala Yousafzai, 17, will receive the National Constitution Center's 2014 Liberty Medal at a ceremony tonight.

Malala is a Pakistani activist for women's rights and education who was the target of an unsuccessful assassination attempt by the Taliban in 2012.

She is receiving this award "for her continued demonstration of courage and resilience in the face of adversity and for serving as a powerful voice for those who have been denied their basic human rights and liberties," the National Constitution Center said in a statement.

She was the co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize earlier this month.

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Subway stations in Seoul, Korea, are outfitted with platform screen doors. / CONTRIBUTED

Glass doors could come to train stations

SEPTA. City Councilman David Oh tells Metro exclusively about the potential of building walls between train cars and riders.

Details

Philadelphia workers would install the screens, Oh said.

- About 20 percent of the screen doors, which are outfitted with TVs, consists of advertising.
- The company claims the screens would improve safety, lighting and efficiency.
- Underground stations would get full-sized screens, but outside platforms would be partially covered.

Imagine a wall of glass doors that separates SEPTA riders and Market-Frankford Line and Broad Street Line train cars — doors that slide open when the train arrives and slide closed when the train departs.

City Councilman David Oh exclusively told Metro that a Korean company is interested in erecting these glass-door walls, which the company calls platform screen doors, in as many subway and El station stops as possible to help improve the safety and cleanliness of SEPTA stations.

Oh said the company, TIS, Inc. — based in Seoul, Korea — is meeting with SEPTA on Oct. 30 to discuss a possible partnership.

"It's cleaner. It smells better. It looks better. It's more efficient. It's safer. It's brighter," Oh said of the screens.

Quoted

"Because the trains don't have to slow down as they approach the station for safety reasons, the trains circulate faster and more efficiently." Oh

SEPTA Spokeswoman Jerri Williams said the screen doors "are one of several measures we are evaluating to improve safety on the platforms."

The company, which installed 289 screens in Seoul in a little more than two years, is looking to enter the U.S. marketplace.

"And this company wants to use Philadelphia as a demonstration," Oh said.

TIS uses a financial model based on advertising. The company would manufacture and install the screens at their own cost, and make their money back from advertising on digital monitors affixed on the screens. And, Oh said, after the company made its money back, it would turn the screens over to SEPTA, which can then profit from the advertising.

The plan would be for the company to build the screens in more than 10 stations as a test, and fill out the rest of the stations if all parties are satisfied.

"And my thing is," Oh said, "you can do it in our city, and then you could headquarter your operation in Philadelphia as you start to market to other parts of the U.S."

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LGBT activist Gloria Casarez honored

The pride flag at City Hall was lowered to half-mast Monday to honor Gloria Casarez, the first director of the city's Office of LGBT Affairs, who died after a long battle with cancer. New columnist Natalie Hope McDonald, right, called Casarez "influential" and "beloved." / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS A GAY PROBLEM

Pope Francis greets the cardinals a day after the closing of the synod on the themes of family as he arrives at the Synod Hall for ordinary public consistory on Monday. / GETTY IMAGES

Divorce and birth control are both prohibited by the Catholic Church, but during my 12-year tenure as a Catholic school student, these issues were pretty much "don't ask, don't tell," so long as the pews (and the collection basket) were full every Sunday.

Conversely, today's Vatican — not to mention Philly's own archdiocese — has been almost maniacal in its denouncement of homosexuality, even as more Catholics publicly support issues like same-sex marriage.

Of course, being in step with basic human rights has never been the church's strongpoint; women are still treated as second-class citizens and are unable to hold the same positions as men. But the recent efforts to exorcise gay people from the flock has sparked considerable criticism.

It might explain why a new report offers uncharacteristically kind yet cautious words about gays, basically asking whether the Vatican should accept LGBT people, saying they have "gifts and qualities to offer," despite long-held beliefs to the contrary.

This newest bandage, likely inspired by Pope Francis' "gay-friendly" pastoral approach, may offer a kinder, gentler tone when it comes to the big pink elephant in the room. But like much of what's coming out of the Vatican these days, it amounts to mostly great PR with very little substance behind it.

In fact, a day after making the statement about, well, "maybe" accepting gay people (sort of), the Vatican backtracked — and fast — cautioning that this is merely a "working" theory. In fact, the statement was retracted in all English versions of the report. So rest assured, conservative Catholics, the Pope says it's still OK to hate gay people.

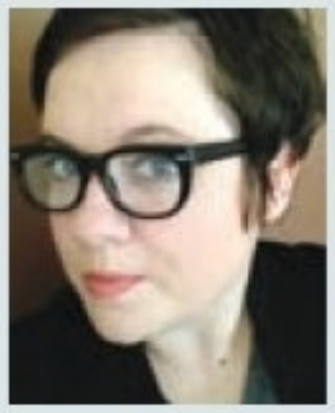
In reality, behind these smoke and mirrors is an ongoing and very un-Christian-like witch-hunt against gay priests and the liberal nuns who serve the LGBT community. The church supports leaders who put gay people in danger every single day around the world. So other than maybe freshening up its image after being mired in unthinkable sexual abuse scandals in recent years, one may want to take these latest "efforts" with, well, a grain (or pillar) of salt.

Will the church ever accept gay people? Possibly. But don't expect any real change to come as long as the Vatican — and men like Chaput (see below) — operate as the oldest, most secretive boys' club in the world. And seeing as how women are still considered "unfit" for priesthood, I'm not holding my breath.

Out Front

NATALIE HOPE MCDONALD

Natalie Hope McDonald is a writer and editor in Philadelphia. Once a month, she will provide her LGBT perspective on culture and politics in a column. She can be reached online at www.nataliehopemcdonald.com and on Twitter at @NatalieMcD.



Local clergy

Chaput still not on board

Philly's conservative Archbishop Charles Chaput has been opposed to issues like marriage equality ever since he took the reigns of the church on the local level.

When same-sex marriage was made legal, he called for an appeal, saying that "laws that defend the traditional definition of marriage were enacted for sound reasons."

Chaput / FILE PHOTO

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No injuries reported in Center City fire

Philadelphia firefighters responded to the scene of a high-rise fire at the Parker Hotel building at 261 South 13th St. in Center City on Monday afternoon. No injuries were reported.

CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Testimony. Girlfriend attacked firefighter's pregnant ex alone

Sade Greenlee and Michael Lawson face charges. / PPD

Sade Greenlee, 28, will face aggravated assault charges for allegedly slugging her firefighter boyfriend's pregnant ex-wife in the stomach 10 times outside an elementary school.

Greenlee and her boyfriend Michael Lawson both allegedly scuffled with his ex-wife's current boyfriend, Brandon Craig, as well. After that altercation, a pregnant Shareba Timbers said Greenlee hit her in the stomach.

"She continued to pound and beat my stomach 10 times," Timbers testified of the Sept. 15 attack at a hearing Monday. "She was just trying to kill my kids."

Timbers was eight months pregnant with twins at the time. She had contractions after the attack but was hospitalized and medicated. She is still pregnant, and her babies are believed to be healthy.

Quoted

"She has some kind of rage and anger inside her, the cause of which I do not know."

Timbers, describing Greenlee

Neither Greenlee nor Lawson were arrested after the event. Two weeks later, on Sept. 30, Greenlee and Lawson allegedly attacked Craig again inside a supermarket at 53rd Street and Chew Avenue.

After Lawson and Craig exchanged blows, Greenlee threw objects at him, including canned foods, a fire extinguisher, a metal candy-bar display and more, Craig testified.

However, aggravated charges against Lawson and Greenlee were dropped to simple assault for fighting Craig.

Lawson was ordered released on his own recognizance by Judge Karen Yvette Simmons.

But Simmons chastised Lawson for his relationship choices.

"Everything that come in a cute package ain't cute," she said.

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‘Czar’ to reverse US Ebola errors, step up response

New role. Some critics have said the naming of a “czar” would add another layer of bureaucracy to a response.

U.S. Ebola response coordinator Ron Klain faces a long to-do list when he begins his new role: soothe Americans’ jitters about the virus, fix federal coordination with states and restore a sense of control over the crisis that the White House had lost.

Klain, a former senior aide in two Democratic administrations who is known for his keen political antenna, must also smooth over tensions with lawmakers who are angry about the missteps and mixed messages.

Klain has been dismissed as a political operative by Republicans because he lacks a medical background.

But administration officials and his associates describe him as a problem solver who understands the levers of government and can ensure smoother coordination among an array of agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health and the Food and Drug Administration.

“(Klain) can have eyes over CDC to make sure they are aggressive,” said Neera Tanden, a former White House official who now leads the Center for American Progress.

“They now have SWAT teams going to all locations with Ebola patients, but clearly that is something they should have been doing earlier,” she said.

Thad Allen, the former Coast Guard chief who served in a similar role leading the administration’s response to the 2010 Gulf oil spill, said it helps to have one person who can explain how all the pieces are working together during a crisis.

“Many times in these complex responses you have to combine resources across agencies, work across boundaries,” Allen said in an interview. REUTERS

No stranger

75

Klain has remained a familiar presence at the White House, making roughly 75 visits there between January 2011, when he stepped down as Biden’s top aide, and June 2014, according to visitor logs.

Klain does not start his job officially until Wednesday. / REUTERS

Watch list

Ebola fear ends for dozens

Weeks of worry about Ebola infection ended on Monday for several dozen people who came off watch lists in the United States, but more than 260 others were still being monitored for symptoms as the U.S. government ramped up its response to the virus.

In Texas, 43 people who had contact with Liberian Thomas Eric Duncan were cleared of twice-daily monitoring after showing no symptoms during a 21-day incubation period.

“There’s zero risk that any of those people who have been marked off the list have Ebola. They were in contact with a person who had Ebola and the time period for them to get Ebola has lapsed. It is over. They do not have Ebola,” Judge Clay Jenkins, the top elected official in Dallas County, said at a news conference. REUTERS

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Militant. Benghazi attack suspect pleads not guilty to murder

Ahmed Abu Khatallah, a Libyan militant accused of participating in the September 2012 attack on the U.S. diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya, pleaded not guilty on Monday to 17 new charges related to the attack.

Khatallah appeared at the brief hearing wearing a green prison jumpsuit with his hair trimmed but long beard intact. He did not speak, and his lawyer, public defender Michelle Peterson, entered the plea on his behalf.

Federal prosecutor Michael DiLorenzo also suggested the government may charge additional defendants in the case. When asked by U.S. District Judge Christopher Cooper whether the prosecution would remain a one-defendant case, DiLorenzo said only that the investigation was ongoing.

REUTERS

National security

Saudi inmate to stay at GITMO

A Saudi inmate with links to al Qaeda will remain at the Guantanamo Bay prison, and a second Saudi man has been cleared for transfer home, a U.S. national security panel said on Monday. Muhammed Abd Al Rahman Awn Al-Shamrani, 39, should stay at the U.S. prison in Cuba because he remains a security threat, the Periodic Review Board said in an online posting. REUTERS

Supporters for the Boston bombing suspect get vocal

Elena Teyer, whose son-in-law was killed by the FBI, spoke against the justice system outside of a hearing for accused Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev on Monday. / MORGAN ROUSSEAU, METRO

Court. Dzhokhar Tsarnaev advocates appeared outside a hearing Monday.

A small but vocal gaggle of Dzhokhar Tsarnaev supporters gathered at a federal courthouse in Boston on Monday to show their devotion to the accused Marathon bomber as attorneys in the case held a brief status hearing ahead of his January trial.

Elena Teyer, the mother-in-law of Tsarnaev acquaintance Ibragim Todashev, was one of six women outside the courthouse speaking out against the justice system.

Todashev, 27, was killed by federal agents in Florida in May 2013.

"We are all here for justice," said Teyer, pointing to photographs of her son-in-law's dead body and explaining what she believes to be holes in law enforcement's account Todashev's death.

Tsarnaev's other supporters also held signs, and one wore a T-shirt with an image of the accused terrorist's face.

"I believe the boys have been set up," said Arina Mondtag, adding that the explosions may have been the result of a gas leak or an inside job with "a bunch of crisis actors brought in."

Quoted

"This is his autopsy, this is all explanation. ... They came from Boston to kill my son-in-law. I know that for sure." Teyer

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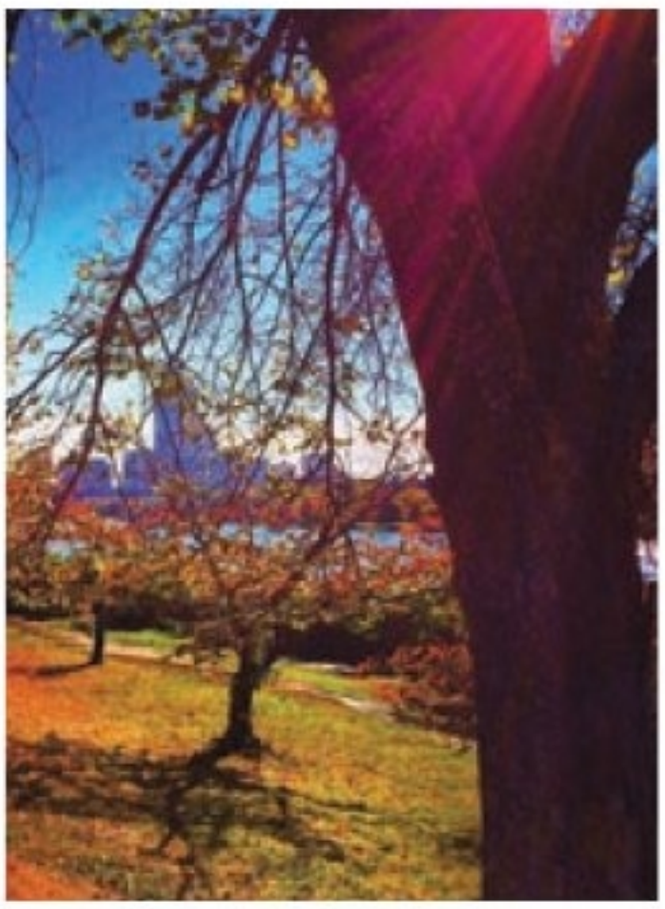

'Up Yonda Butterfly Farm, Lake George, NY'

Tracy Crinion, Seaford, New York; Category: Smell

Cops in Indiana believe man in custody is a serial killer

Decades. Police said the victims go back 20 years, and more could surface.

Police in northwestern Indiana said on Monday they could be dealing with a serial killer with victims going back as far as 20 years after a man suspected in one woman's murder led them to six more bodies over the weekend.

Darren Vann, 43, of Gary, Indiana, was in custody, and police were seeking murder charges against him, said John Doughty, police chief of the neighboring city of Hammond.

Vann was arrested after police were called on Friday to a motel in Hammond where the body of Afrika Hardy, 19, was found.

Vann is a registered sex offender in Texas, Doughty said.

The police chief said Hardy had advertised sexual services on the Backpage website and that she and Vann met at the motel. When Hardy did not return from the appointment, a woman who had helped to arrange the encounter went to track her down and found the body.

Once in custody, Vann was cooperative, admitted his involvement in Hardy's murder and led police to the bodies of six other women — all in in abandoned houses in Gary. REUTERS

Darren Deon Vann, 43, confessed to one murder and led police to the bodies of six other women in Gary, Indiana. / REUTERS

Virginia

Police search near where remains found

Authorities searched for clues on Monday across a wide area near where human remains, possibly those of a missing University of Virginia student, were found over the weekend.

Searchers found the remains, which may be those of Hannah Graham, an 18-year-old sophomore, on Saturday in southern Albemarle County. They have been moved to the state medical examiner's office in Richmond for identification.

A spokeswoman for the Albemarle County Police Department said any announcement about the identification would be released through the department. No news briefing has been scheduled. REUTERS

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Is a 'gap year' after high school for you?

Alternative education. Taking a break before college is increasingly popular.

Elizabeth Campbell spent a year tutoring English in Spain after graduating high school. / PROVIDED

It's a familiar script that millions of students follow each year: Graduate high school and then immediately start college.

But more and more students are embracing the "gap year" — a year of volunteering and working before heading to campus.

"In the beginning of senior year I was really stressed out with homework and extracurricular activities and everything that goes along with it in high school," says Elizabeth Campbell, a 19-year-old from Little Rock, Arkansas. "And I decided, 'Hey, maybe I want to take some time off and travel and learn another language.'"

Campbell decided to defer her admission to Furman University for a year and moved to Seville, Spain, as part of a gap year program with the Council on International Educational Exchange and spent a year learning Spanish and tutoring children.

In many ways, Campbell's story is typical of students who take gap years, says Jay Bacrania, the CEO of Signet Education in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Bacrania and his colleague Sheila Akbar often help plan gap years for the students they work with, which they stress isn't a yearlong vacation.

"They are going to be challenged," he says, adding that planning is key. "It's not really a way to disguise a year off."

LAKSHMI GANDHI
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lakshmi.gandhi@metro.us

The big questions

Things to consider

Students weighing whether to take a gap year should ask themselves these questions:

What do you want to accomplish? "Think about what your goals are," advises Bacrania. "Is there a project you want to work on?" He suggests that high school seniors talk with their families or other mentors about things they'd like to achieve during the year and to come up with a realistic plan reach those goals.

Are you taking time off for the right reasons? Sometimes students who didn't get into their dream college think that a gap year can help bolster their college applications and get them to the next level. "We don't encourage that," says Bacrania, noting that some students flirt with the idea of the gap year quite late into their senior years when they feel like they aren't getting into the schools they want. Both Akbar and Bacrania say they usually suggest that students complete the college application process and defer admission for a year.

How much structure do you need? Some students, like Campbell, want to focus on developing a skill or learning a language during their gap years. Akbar recalls working on a plan for a student who was interested in exploring careers in fashion. "We researched summer programs and said, 'These are the pros and these are the cons.'"

Can you build in time for reflection? The gap year isn't just about cramming your resume full of volunteer projects or filling your passport with stamps. Can you write a paper or a blog about what you've learned? "You want the student to reflect on their experience and find ways to share that experience with others," says Bacrania.

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3 Things the youngest billionaires have in common

Leave it to the 11 billionaires under 40 on Forbes' Youngest Billionaires List to spark envy, awe and inspiration. Are you one app idea away from the big bucks? Here are some traits everyone on the list shares, to help inspire your next move.

They're all tech savvy

No surprise here — tech is where the money is. Bigwigs at Facebook, Snapchat and Twitter all make the annual list yet again, but even the newcomers aren't tech clueless. Uber CEO Travis Kalanick is 38 and didn't grow up obsessed with social media like today's young adults, but his app is killing it right now. Nick Woodman, 39, got rich by founding GoPro, a wearable video camera company. At first, he just had an idea and not the tech know-how, but he educated himself and his company grew.

Elizabeth Holmes, 30, is the only female billionaire under 40 on Forbes' list. She made her fortune by founding the blood testing company Theranos. / GETTY IMAGES

They don't get too comfortable

It's easy to get stuck in a rut at work if you make decent money. But the 11 billionaires on this list all look for new ways to be challenged. Many started out at dream companies, like Apple, but instead of being content with a good salary and enviable career they asked themselves, "What's next?" Working your way up your company's corporate ladder is a great goal, but don't underestimate the value of branching out on your own if you have a brilliant idea and a way to make it work.

They didn't let adversity stand in the way

Most on the list were not born into wealth. Whatsapp founder Jan Koum, 38, and his mother lived in government-assisted housing when he was a child. When his mother was diagnosed with cancer, Koum paid the bills by working at Yahoo. There, he met great mentors and established relationships with them, including one with Yahoo exec David Filo, who co-founded the app with him. Another guy who didn't just quit: Napster founder Sean Parker, 34. After the rise and fall of Napster, Parker jumped onboard Facebook early on, as well as Spotify and civic engagement startup Brigade Media.

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Timothy Sykes is a millionaire stock trader and entrepreneur.

3 things I learned on a reality show

This past week, my girlfriend and I and six of my top students were on Bravo's "Below Deck." I chartered a 154-foot yacht for three days and treated everyone to what I thought would be a luxurious and fun experience. Here are three lessons from my miscalculation:

Lesson No. 1: Reality shows don't depict reality

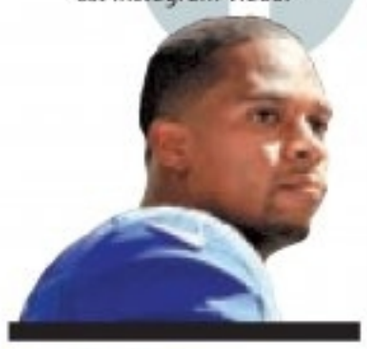
I thought it'd be amazing to trade aboard with my students and have some romantic alone time with my girlfriend. Even though both activities went perfectly in real life, the TV show depicts them as disasters.

I made $70,000 on my yacht trade and was sure they'd show some or all of it because it was pretty dramatic. Instead, the producers focused on my complaining about the lack of Internet — which did make the trade a little tricky — and made it seem like I didn't make any money.

Lesson No. 2: There's no such thing as bad press

This isn't my first or last reality show, and no matter how each one turns out, more people discover me, my story and my niche trading strategy. In a noisy world you must do everything possible to get the word out about yourself and your expertise.

New York Giants wide receiver Victor Cruz might be injured for the season, but I love his post-surgery upbeat attitude in his latest Instagram video.



Airlines still don't seem to realize the risks of Ebola, as we keep hearing of more Ebola patients who have flown and risked infecting others.

Lesson No. 3: Lose some battles to win the war

The biggest reason the TV show ripped on me is because I "only" tipped the "Below Deck" crew $17,000, roughly 25 percent, instead of the full $22,000 I had planned on tipping them had they given me the service I was expecting.

For exclusive commentary, visit **Metro.us/blogs.**

I was right in principle, as tips should be based on service. But because this was being filmed, I should've sucked it up and been overly generous to make the crew happy and not want to talk badly about me in their post-trip interviews. It was my bad for being frugal and realistic when I got myself into this situation and should've realized the consequences of my actions.

These served as good lessons for me. Too bad there's no reality show guru who could've mentored me beforehand!

What Sykes is thinking about this week

1

Stealth augmented reality startup Magic Leap just raised $500 million in an investment round led by Google. Big things are coming for Google Glass!

2

Despite all the fears, Ebola really isn't spreading as fast as some people thought, thank God!

3

The U.S. stock markets have had some nice consolidation as of late, which is very healthy for us long-term. A little more fading wouldn't hurt either.

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Will Cyrus be Grande's new life coach?

PERHAPS THE ONLY RECENT PIC OF MILEY CYRUS KEEPING HER TONGUE IN HER MOUTH WAS WHEN ARIANA GRANDE SHOWED HER AFFECTION AT THE VMAS IN AUGUST. GETTY IMAGES

It's tough being a Disney Channel alum-turned-international pop star, mostly because there are so few people who really get what you're going through. Case in point: When Ariana Grande found herself feeling overwhelmed by nasty reports that she'd been caught swearing at her fans and that her life coach had up and quit on her, she had nowhere else to turn but Miley Cyrus. "I was upset and I contacted Miley. I said, 'Miley, I'm so sad — what do I do? This isn't true. My heart is broken, I feel so bad,'" Grande tells the Daily Mirror. "She was like, 'Girl, don't even look at it. Just be happy that you're blessed. You have family and friends that love you, you have fans that love you who know what's true and what's not. It will blow over and tomorrow they'll be talking about something else.'" I'm going to go ahead and assume Cyrus delivered this advice while lying spread-eagle on the hood of a car, tongue sticking out, but still: It looks like Grande has already found a new life coach.

There was likely only tongue involved because (gasp!) it was rehearsed. Miley and Ariana, let this be a lesson to you two! / GETTY IMAGES

Let's talk about that infamous VMAs kiss

More than a decade ago, Madonna shocked MTV viewers by locking lips with Britney Spears (and Christina Aguilera) during the 2003 VMAs — which might not seem like news, but Spears' longtime manager, Larry Rudolph, feels like reminiscing. And you may be surprised to learn that the lip-lock was completely planned. Rehearsed, even. "Madonna had been very, very, very rigid about the rehearsals," Rudolph tells Billboard. The nerve, right? "She would never address me by name. She would just say, 'You make sure Britney's here tomorrow at 10 o'clock.'" After it went off successfully, Rudolph found himself in an elevator with Madge herself. "And she said, 'You see, Larry? It was all worth it.'" And she gave him a big (less photographed) kiss.

Evan Rachel Wood still wants to discuss 2003

Speaking of 2003: Remember that pink Vanity Fair "It's totally raining teens" cover? Evan Rachel Wood still does. A fan on Twitter posted the a copy of the cover — featuring Wood alongside such young Hollywood luminaries of the time as Amanda Bynes, Mary Kate and Ashley Olsen, Mandy Moore, Hilary Duff, Alexis Bledel, Raven-Symone and Lindsay Lohan — with the caption, "Never forget." And apparently that's not a problem for Wood, as the posting prompted her to go on a bit of a Twitter tirade about the experience. "I was almost in tears after this shoot," she writes. "They tried that dress on me, I wasn't comfortable but they told me there was no time 'cause everyone else took up too much time with their fittings. Then I was given a choice of whether I wanted to wear flats or heels. I chose flats and was immediately handed heels and told they looked better. ... I was 15 and felt for the first time my identity being erased and the pressure to shut up and do what you are told. I felt like meat."

Evan Rachel Wood, third from right, did not like wearing those heels. / VANITY FAIR

THE WORD

Ned Ehrbar takes on the world of gossip.

NED EHRBAR
@Nedrick
ned.ehrbar@metro.us

How to get away with murdering your Twitter rep: Mess with Rhimes

Don't go on Twitter to complain to Shonda Rhimes about gay love scenes on the shows she produces, because she will respond. And she has more followers than you. A viewer named Dina Abdel Hakiem (925 followers) is getting more attention than she probably expected after tweeting to Rhimes (737,000 followers): "The gay scenes on 'Scandal' and 'How to Get Away with Murder' are too much. There is no point and they add nothing." Rhimes responded with a pair of tweets, starting with the simple, "There are no gay scenes. There are scenes with people in them." But apparently that wasn't enough, so she added, "If you use the phrase 'gay scenes,' you are not only late to the party but also not invited to the party."

DON'T QUESTION SHONDA RHIMES. GETTY IMAGES

ALBA IS POISED TO MAKE A LOT OF MONEY. GETTY IMAGES

Jessica Alba can make an Honest living

Jessica Alba should maybe consider not worrying too much about her acting career, and not just because of the tepid response to that "Sin City" sequel a couple of months ago. Alba's eco-friendly lifestyle brand, The Honest Co., is gearing up to go public with a valuation just under $1 billion, according to the Hollywood Reporter. The firm was launched in 2012, employs more than 200 people in its Santa Monica office and is estimated to bring in more than $150 million in revenue this year. Not too shabby. So how'd she get there? "I knew my strengths and weaknesses," Alba says.

2 CULTURE

Twitter feed

Today, Liam Payne has been tying one on, Patton Oswalt is tying every thing back to "Pretty in Pink," Ricky Gervais has some tips for life and Seth Rogen is feeling left out.

@Real_Liam_Payne
Feeling a little hung over

@pattonoswalt
Andie should've picked Duckie. It's where the 80's went wrong. It led to George W. Bush & 9/11.

@rickygervais
It's better to create something that others criticise than to create nothing and criticise others. Play nice everyone. & have a great day :)

@Sethrogen
What does a guy gotta do to be cast in a g—damn Nicholas Sparks movie already?

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A $ign of the times

Hip-hop. Ty Dolla $ign is still preparing his debut, but he has bigger things on his mind.

Ty Dolla $ign might be hip-hop's man of the moment, but it's not the present that the 29-year-old crooner appears concerned with.

"I'm just trying to come up with the next chapter of music," he says. "When we first came out, our sound didn't exist and now every artist has that sound. That's what tells us it's time for the new chapter."

The "we" he refers to consists of himself, rapper YG and producer DJ Mustard, three Los Angeles natives whose self-described "ratchet" brand of hip-hop and R&B has dominated clubs and airwaves in 2014. Mustard has been churning out hits since 2011, when he broke out beyond his city with Tyga's "Rack City." YG had a coming out party of his own earlier this year with the release of his critically acclaimed album, "My Krazy Life." And now, following the success of his Beach House mixtape series and a handful of high-profile guest appearances, it's Ty Dolla $ign's turn under the bright lights.

After spending the summer opening for his Taylor Gang labelmate Wiz Khalifa, Ty Dolla $ign — his birth name is Tyrone Griffin — hopped right into a tour of his own. But even in the midst of his first nationwide headlining tour, he's prepping the release of his upcoming major label debut, "Free TC." It's a project that Griffin hopes will showcase his evolution.

"I've been experimenting with different snares, and I'm switching drummers so there won't be as many snaps. So just expect different sounds," he says, before cutting himself short. "I'm not going to give away all my ideas, but it'll be like when Jimi Hendrix went from the Experience to the Band of Gypsys."

As to whether Atlantic Records approves of its signee moving away from the sounds that made him a bankable star, Griffin claims he and his label execs are on the same page.

"They get it," he says. "They understand that it's not about following the last hit that came out. It's about putting out something new. We're the trendsetters."

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Ty Dolla $ign rocks TLA tonight. / GETTY IMAGES

Brotherly love

Behind the album title

The album title of "Free TC" is a nod to Griffin's younger brother TC, who is currently serving a life sentence behind bars for murder. Ty Dolla $ign says it's a crime his brother did not commit and the album's intention is to raise awareness for TC's cause.

"It's a statement and it's literal," he says of the title. "I'm taking the money from this album and I'm putting it into getting my brother out of jail and bringing awareness to everybody that gets injustice and gets forgotten about."

Earlier this year, in an interlude recorded from his prison cell, TC appeared on YG's album, "My Krazy Life."

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TV watch list

ONE MYSTERY IS HOW THE FLASH'S HAIR IS ALWAYS SO TALL WHEN HE WEARS THAT HOOD OVER IT ALL THE TIME. / JACK ROWAND, THE CW

DRAMA

'The Flash'

Barry and the others go after the Mist, a villain with toxic gas powers, which is a super villain power that we have absolutely no childish jokes about, none at all.

8 P.M., CW

SPORTS

World Series Game One

Hey, there's still baseball happening! Take a break from the NFL and watch the Royals take on the Giants in the first game of the World Series.

8 P.M., FOX

TALK SHOWS

'Jimmy Kimmel Live'

Jimmy welcomes Bill Murray to the show. Maybe they'll talk about that whole "Ghostbusters" reboot situation?

11:35 P.M., ABC

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With a little help from Winnie Cooper

Nostalgia. "The Wonder Years" star Danica McKellar looks back on the show as it finally comes out on DVD.

Danica McKellar was 13 when she started "The Wonder Years," the nostalgic show that followed Kevin Arnold (Fred Savage), a boy living in a 1968 American suburb, over six seasons. Since then she's become a mathlete and an author of best-selling math books for teens. But she's still pestered for playing Winnie Cooper, Kevin's sometime gal pal.

She's talking about it again, this time for its first-ever, very truant official DVD release. The show has stayed off shelves due to music rights issues; when it hit Netflix Instant, many of the songs — including the Joe Cocker one that iconically ran over the credits — had to be swapped out for replacements and sound-alikes.

How has it stayed so popular? "It was the first show that really honored the strength and the emotions kids have at such a young age. Most TV shows up to that point were all about parents," McKellar explains.

"It got into the mind and a heart of a small child," she says. "We all have such huge emotions and the world doesn't really honor them in the same way they honor adult feelings, because they're just kids. You're not in control of your own life yet. You can't make your own decisions. We all have memories of those painful early years and the elation of those early years. The show honored these huge, strong emotions and said, 'These are valid, this is real.'"

The writing staff would even use things McKellar and Savage would say to each other when cameras weren't rolling. She was surprised to find one episode dedicated to the "Do you 'like' him, or do you 'like like' him?" question — something she had been saying.

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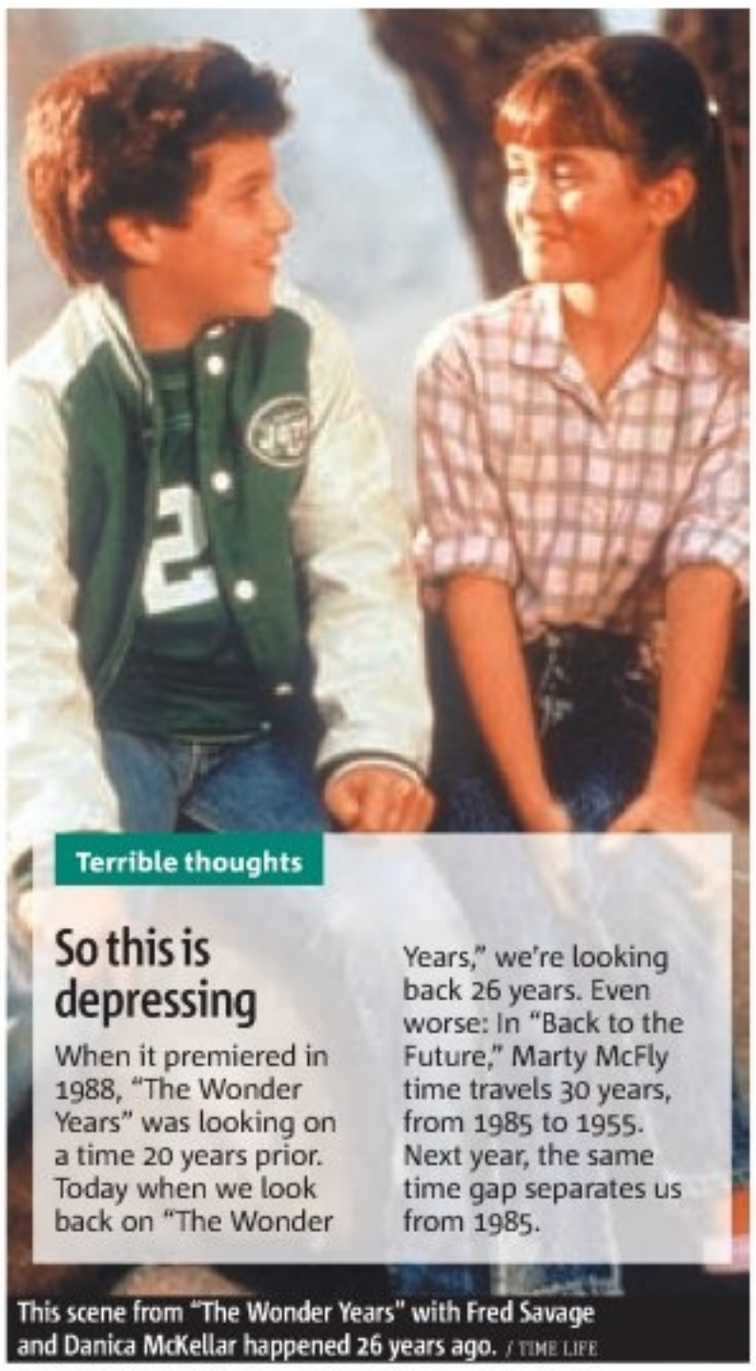

Terrible thoughts

So this is depressing

When it premiered in 1988, "The Wonder Years" was looking on a time 20 years prior. Today when we look back on "The Wonder Years," we're looking back 26 years. Even worse: In "Back to the Future," Marty McFly time travels 30 years, from 1985 to 1955. Next year, the same time gap separates us from 1985.

This scene from "The Wonder Years" with Fred Savage and Danica McKellar happened 26 years ago. / TIME LIFE

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Adam McKay gets serious (via 'My Little Pony')

"[WITHOUT] A CONSUMER BASE TO BUY PRODUCTS, THE LABOR MARKET BECOMES INCREDIBLY DISTILLED AND WAGES PLUMMET AS UNEMPLOYMENT GOES UP. IT CREATES A VAST UNDERCLASS AND A REALLY UNHEALTHY ECONOMY," SAYS ADAM MCKAY.
WE THE ECONOMY

Interview. The director of "Anchorman" tried to find a fun way to talk about income inequality.

"Anchorman" director and Funny or Die co-founder Adam McKay has a thing for being entertaining. So for his entry in Morgan Spurlock's massive, ambitious anthology project "We the Economy" — 20 short films that aim to help everyday viewers better understand economic issues — McKay decided to tackle the issue of income inequality by making a "My Little Pony" parody, roping in the vocal talents of Amy Poehler, Maya Rudolph and Sarah Silverman. He just hopes the Bronies are watching.

So when you think 'income inequality,' the first thing that pops into your head is 'My Little Pony'?

We were just trying to find a way that had energy, had color, had laughs and at the same time, a bunch of information. My 9-year-old and 14-year-old daughters had been watching "My Little Pony" like crazy around the house and I'd been hearing the kind of aggressive optimism of that show and those cheery voices, and I thought, that's kind of hilarious, because that's how we all sort of walk into the economy anyway. We all think, "Oh, it's America!" I can be whatever I want to be, and then we all get slapped and shoved down a bit. So I thought a parody of "My Little Pony" was a perfect vehicle for that.

Director Adam McKay contributed a "My Little Pony" sketch to the anthology series "We the Economy," which starts streaming today at www.wetheeconomy.com. / PROVIDED

Strange culture

Bronies

How familiar are you with Brony culture?

I didn't know anything about it. I started to do the movie and people kept mentioning it to me, so I went and looked up the documentary ["A Brony Tale"]. That is a fascinating world. If any work I ever do intersects with the Brony subculture, I will be very proud.

Income inequality has become a very front-and-center topic recently.

It's really, really extreme in the U.S. Fifty percent of all the wealth going to the top 1 percent, and 80 percent of the American public gaining no wealth whatsoever over the last 30 years. ... In any economy you're going to have some people doing slightly better than others, and that's fine, but when you have a very small amount doing titanically better than a large majority, it creates major problems.

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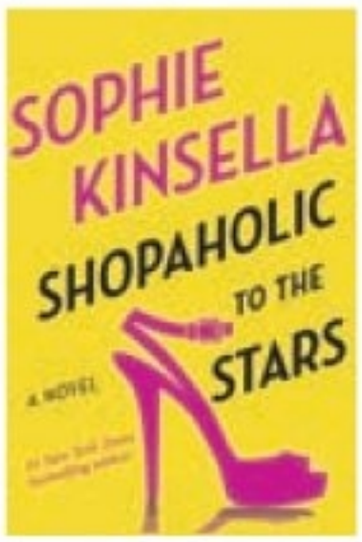
Sophie Kinsella talks feminism and the return of 'Shopaholic'

Novel. Just because it's escapism doesn't mean it's just fluff.

When Sophie Kinsella released her first book in 2003, "Confessions of a Shopaholic," "chick-lit" was a new genre. The story about romance, shopping sprees and friendship resonated with readers all over the world and even spawned a movie starring Isla Fisher and Hugh Dancy. Kinsella's seventh novel in the series, out today, is her first in four years; it has been 11 years since the first "Shopaholic" book. We talk to her about the book's deeper themes and how writing for women has changed over time.

'Shopaholic to the Stars' is definitely a fun read, but there is a deeper theme of how women's work is valued versus their husbands' work. Is this a discussion you wanted to spark for readers?
I never write any scenes deliberately to provoke discussion, but I do try to reflect reality as I see it. The struggle for any family to balance its breadwinning and parenting needs is definitely a big issue of today. Becky and Luke have a very real dilemma: They want to support each other and follow their individual ambitions but remain a tight family unit. It's a tough ask and I don't think there are any easy answers.



Has writing about Becky changed since the first book came out?
When I started writing the first "Shopaholic" book, debt was not the topical subject it is today — in fact, I feel like I was ahead of the curve! ... The financial crisis shook us all up and it was weirdly satisfying writing Becky's response to it in "Mini Shopaholic." I think the world has been through its own shopaholic journey. We're all a bit wiser now, and Becky is, too.

You were one of the first authors whose books were labeled 'chick lit.' Was that a label you embraced?
I'm fairly relaxed about the phrase "chick lit," partly because it's so nebulous. What does it even mean, exactly? But I do think it's a shame to categorize a readership as all-female before you even begin. I know I have some male readers, even if they hide the books behind sports magazines! So I'd prefer "romantic comedy" or the label I saw in a bookshop once: "wit lit."

Has the way you write to women or anything about the book market changed over time?
When I write, I don't really think about "writing to women" or the book market. I think that would distract me, and anyway, I don't believe in trying to second-guess readers or markets. I just tell a story, in the best way I can, trying to write the book that I'd love to read myself. I haven't deliberately changed my style, although I have obviously noticed trends coming and going around me in the industry. (No, I am not planning a "50 Shades of Shopaholic"!)

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I'M FOR CLIMATE ACTION

The battle of the Belgium waffle

You'll find fewer tourists in French-speaking Liege. / MARC VERPOORTEN

Local flavor. Watch what you call the sweet treat when dining abroad.

The Liege "gaufre" is sweeter than the Brussels version. / JEAN-PAUL REMY

Whatever you do, don't ask for a "Belgian waffle."

There's no one waffle in Belgium, and in a few cities the local version is a source of civic pride. So assuming that to taste one waffle is to taste them all might just offend. And don't go looking for one at breakfast time; it's more of a midday treat.

The two best-known variants are in Brussels and in the Liege; the two cities, located about an hour apart, maintain a long-standing rivalry. The rectangular Brussels waffle has a crispy, golden coating, while the rough-edged Liege version is sweeter, richer and chewier.

You can find the Brussels pastry everywhere in the city, where waffle joints alternate with beer shops, chocolatiers and frites stands (an even more sensitive issue than the waffles — never refer to them as "french fries"). They're especially prominent as you close in on the narrow streets leading to the infamous Manneken Pis, the bronze fountain featuring a urinating boy that has become a cheeky icon for the city.

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Meatballs and gin

In Liege

Liege is the largest city in Wallonia, Belgium's French-speaking southern section, but it's a much quieter, less touristy locale. At the Sunday La Batte market, the country's largest and oldest market, you can find everything from local delicacies to live poultry to knock-off "Gangnam Style" toys (yes, still).

Liege also boasts its trademark meatballs in syrup, made with peket, a local gin variant that can be tried in a host of flavors at "La Maison du Peket." On a bench outside the restaurant, sit next to a statue of fedora-clad favorite son Georges Simenon, creator of the fictional detective Jules Maigret.

To walk off the waffles and meatballs, stroll the Coteaux de la Citadelle, a winding walk along the 13th-century defensive walls that provides panoramic views of the Meuse River.

PLUS

Wandering

Brussels

On one side of the central square Grand Place is the Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert, a skylit 19th-century shopping arcade where you can taste most of Brussels' best-known chocolates, including Godiva, Neuhaus and Leonidas (venture a little farther afield to find their smaller, artisan counterparts). To feast your eyes instead, museums dedicated to art, musical instruments and comic strips are all within walking distance.

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Do-it-yourself kids' Halloween costume ideas

Getting creative. See six costumes you can easily make at home — for cheap!

If you're a parent, chances are your child can't contain his or her excitement for Halloween. Running errands turns into luring your kids away from the "Frozen" and vampire costumes and steering clear of the candy aisle. If your child wants a truly original costume, it takes some DIY skills. But you don't have to be Martha Stewart for your son or daughter to have a cute, homemade costume. Here are some ideas sent in by creative Metro readers.

We want to see your kids' costumes! Tweet and Instagram them tagging @ MetroPhilly and you may see your child in the paper.

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Lego and cotton candy costumes

For the Lego costume, use a box that is about the length of your child's torso — it should end right below the waist so kids can still bend their knees. Cut holes big enough for the head and shoulders, legs and each arm. Have your child help either paint the box or use colored duct tape to cover it entirely. Glue Solo cups down to form the pegs and tape down the original box openings.

For the cotton candy costume, spray paint pillow stuffing all over so it turns pink. Hot-glue it all over a similar-colored shirt and sweatpants — front and back.

A.U. PHOTOS AGGREGATED FROM SCOOPSHOT

Lobster baby costume

To make an adorable and warm lobster costume, dress your baby in red head-to-toe and place adult-size red mittens on his or her little hands. Top off the look with a red knit cap. Head to a craft store or dollar store for some googly eyes to hot-glue onto the cap. Tote your little lobster in a bucket from a discount home store.

Choo-choo train costume

For this costume, you'll need one long box, one small box, colored construction paper, aluminum foil and a party cup for the chimney. Connect the two boxes using clear packing tape.

iPod costume

The iPod has become a classic Halloween costume. You'll need a box, red and gray paint, poster board, glue and scissors. Cut holes in the box for your child's head and arms. Paint the box red. Make the circular dial with the poster board and use the gray paint to make the Apple logo and button dials. Glue the poster board cutouts to the box.

Chicken Little costume

To DIY this adorable little chick costume, you'll need a few yellow boas. Hot glue them around a sweatshirt and sweatpants and your cutie is ready to rake in the candy!

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Horoscope

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. You can make positive strides if you are not fearful and are willing to face challenges head-on. Hesitation will cause you to miss opportunities.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Organization will enable you to attain a lucrative position. Your ability to make valuable contributions will be recognized.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. You are viewing the world around you unrealistically. Listen to the advice of those who know the score.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan. 20. Proceed with caution when dealing with money, health or legal matters. Don't get involved in other people's investment strategies.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb. 18. Invest in the projects you believe in. Positive changes can be made if you are honest about your strengths and weaknesses.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Compromise if you are to get a partnership back on track. A quick response to negative issues will soon put things right.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. If asked to defend a friend, make sure that you have your facts in order so that you can help his or her case.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. Keep your professional reputation intact. Someone is trying to lead you astray. You must keep your cool if you want to come out ahead.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. Do something nice for a friend, a relative, yourself. Favorable solutions that will alleviate your current worries will develop.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. Steer away from troubles at home. Taking sides or getting caught in someone else's argument will lead to an intense no-win situation.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. Make the most of your helpful nature. You can always be counted on to give a little extra help where and when it is needed.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Better opportunities are available to you, so don't settle for less. Your talents are more valuable than you realize. Give your all.

EUGENIA LAST

Sudoku: Easy and hard

3	6		2				1	
7	1		3		6			8
	8				1			4
		5	1		7			
				3				
			4		2	6		
2			9				5	
9			6		3		7	2
	7				8		3	6

	7	8	5		3			
	2						7	
6			2			9		
		7			9		3	4
2		6				5		9
3	8		1			6		
		2			5			1
	6						5	
			3		6	4	9	

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Letters

US has many incentives to stop Ebola

Our government and medical officials felt compelled, early on, to allay fear in our general population by touting the superiority and preparedness of our medical facilities and staff, which precluded any possibility of an Ebola outbreak happening here.

Even with the early missteps, that original message of safety and survival continues and must be very attractive to people in Ebola-infected areas.

We have attracted others here with jobs and freedom. We should not be surprised when people from infected areas travel here to escape the likelihood of having themselves and their families ravished by a deadly epidemic.

That potential exodus is reason enough for the international community, particularly the highly industrialized western nations, to accelerate its medical assistance.

GLENN HAYES, VIA EMAIL

Re: 'Ebola facts will have to wait until after election' (Metro, Oct. 17-19)
Letter writer Kevin Metz seems to believe that whoever wins the Senate will make a difference in the Ebola crisis; unfortunately, this is not true. How can an election have anything to do with a virus?

GERALD LARKE, VIA EMAIL

letters@metro.us

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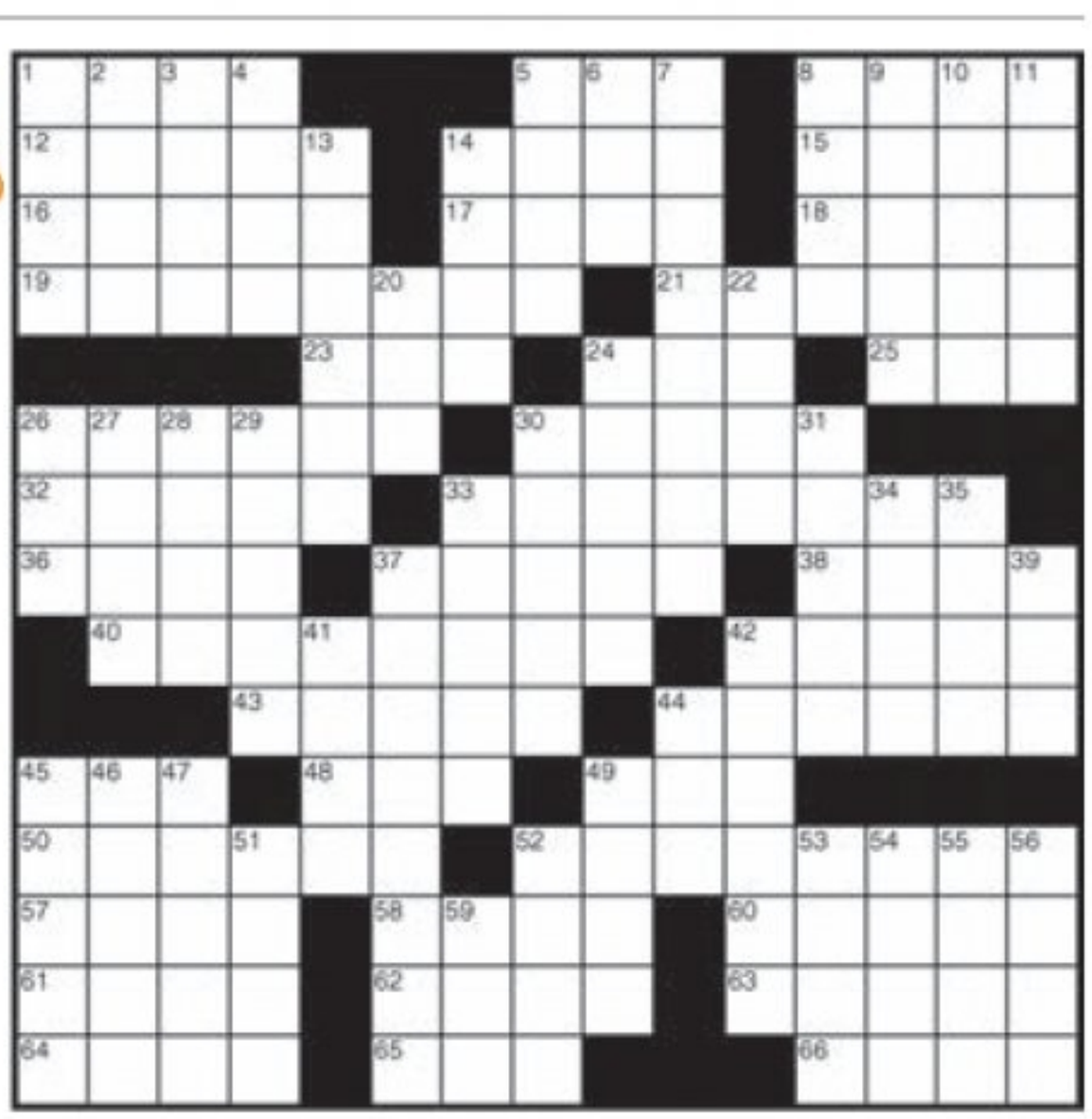
Crossword

Across
1 Dueler's pride
5 911 responder
8 "Oops!" (hyph.)
12 Camel's pit stop
14 Not pro
15 Burger mate
16 Plain-living sect
17 Tarzan's transport
18 Cougar's pad
19 Sent elsewhere
21 More than fast
23 Gold Medal org.
24 Mountain overlooking Troy
25 Da or ja
26 Perceived
30 Impostor
32 Smart —
33 Upbraids (2 wds.)
36 Columbus' home
37 La Scala city
38 Far from colorful
40 Tire pump, e.g.
42 Gossipmonger
43 UPS competitor
44 Fragrant fir
45 Crunch targets
48 Auction signal
49 Muscle for push-ups
50 Bruce Wayne
52 Nurtured
57 Jai —
58 Cubbyhole
60 Gridiron deal
61 Thumb through
62 Confederate
63 Wiser
64 London park
65 Catch a glimpse of
66 Opry's st.

Down
1 Birds do it
2 Tagged along
3 "Get real!" (2 wds.)
4 Swell, as a river
5 Oklahoma town
6 Geog. feature
7 Secures firmly (2 wds.)
8 NCAA Bruins
9 Grizzled
10 Dark complexion
11 Rabbit's cousins
13 Chilling cry
14 With, to monsieur
20 Fishing gear
22 Neutral colors
24 "— — America Singing"
26 – Paulo, Brazil
27 Pre-college
28 No, on the Rhine
29 Pooh-pooh
30 Fragrant perennial
31 Sing falsetto
33 Gave as an example
34 Coffee brewers
35 "Toodle-oo!" (hyph.)
37 Grotto regulars
39 Thud
41 Horne of "Stormy Weather"
42 Racing vessels
44 Casino action
45 Make blush
46 Obstinate
47 Sober-minded
49 Snail-paced
51 Play charades
52 Double agent
53 Q.E.D. part
54 Go postal
55 TV genie portrayer
56 Laura of "Jurassic Park"
59 Pamplona yell



Yesterday's answer

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3 SPORTS

Flyers on mend

Coburn expects to play

Good news for the Flyers, whose defensive deficiencies have cost the team in their 1-2-2 start: Defenseman Braydon Coburn could return to face the Blackhawks Tuesday. "Today was a good day, and I felt like there was some improvement and felt more comfortable out there," Coburn said.

DON'T LISTEN TO HYPE, COWBOYS STILL BAD

I hate the Dallas Cowboys. Now I realize this revelation is hardly unique to the countless Eagles fans who have spent their entire lives loathing America's most annoying team. But this is the time, right now, when that raw emotion has a renewed significance.

You see, the drumbeat for the Cowboys has begun anew after their surprising 6-1 start, and it is deafening. Troy Aikman, the former Cowboy, has shirked the pretense of objectivity in his role as Fox's lead TV analyst and has become an evangelist for his old team. The rest of the media is following suit.

Well, let me be the first to respond with a few words of reason. The Cowboys are not back. They still have a bad defense, they still have a mediocre coach, and they will always have a clueless owner. The notion that they will deny the Eagles the NFC East title this season is laughable.

Murray has an impressive 913 yards in seven games. / GETTY IMAGES

First of all, the Eagles are smarter. In the battle of wits between Jason Garrett and Chip Kelly, it is no contest. Kelly has a better record at every level of the game, and a much quicker mind on the sidelines.

The biggest reason the Cowboys cannot finish with a better record than the Eagles is their own blind stupidity. They are already on the record saying they wouldn't hesitate to hand the ball to their biggest weapon, running back DeMarco Murray, 400 times this year (an injury waiting to happen). On the other hand, the Eagles pair LeSean McCoy and Darren Sproles to share the workload.

The Eagles are also better defensively. Their eight sacks against the Giants were a statement. The Cowboys had the worst defense in the NFL last year, and they really aren't much better. The only difference is, Dallas has kept the ball away from opposing offenses by controlling the clock with Murray.

Cataldi on the Cowboys

Believe it. Chip Kelly is not just going to embarrass Jerry Jones and his overhyped team, he's going to do it on Thanksgiving Day in that grotesque $1.5-billion AT&T Stadium.

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Cataldi. Flyers still pathetic on ice, even worse in front office

In the time warp where the Flyers permanently reside, Ed Snider is still 40, his team wins Stanley Cups with its fists and — above all — there is no such thing as a shootout. That's why, nine years after the NHL installed its tiebreaker system, the Flyers are still terrible at it.

No, that's not entirely accurate. They would have to improve to be terrible at it. The Flyers are 27-53 since the shootouts began, worst in the NHL. Already this season, they are 0-2, a grim reality accepted with a smile by the team.

Last week, after the first of back-to-back shootout losses, coach Craig Berube was openly joking about the current state of his one-on-one shooters. He thought it was comical that Jeff Hextall, the 19-year-old son of GM Ron Hextall, had stoned the team in shootout drills.

Visit **Metro.us** to see what Angelo has to say about the 76ers' season.

"I guess we'd better wins some games in regulation," Berube said.

The Flyers just accept the fact that they will lose a majority of the games tied after the five-minute overtime. The big debate last year at this time was over the culture of the Flyers, the stuck-in-the-past organization run by an 81-year-old man. Well, the tiebreaker in that argument should be obvious by now: It's the shootout.

Matt Read is 0-for-2 on the shootout this season. / GETTY IMAGES

Idle thoughts

What else is eating at Angelo Cataldi this week?

- Six years ago, Phillies president Dave Montgomery had to decide between Ruben Amaro Jr. and Mike Arbuckle as the successor to Pat Gillick as GM. Montgomery made the wrong choice. Arbuckle is an assistant GM in Kansas City and is headed to the World Series.
- Mo'Ne Davis got another award last week. Just one question: How many honors would she have received if she had actually won the Little League World Series?

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